

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A support member comprising:
a support panel; and
a retention element integrally formed with the support panel and of the same material as the support panel for use in mounting an associated component to the support panel, the retention element defining a bore for receiving an associated threaded fixing element which mounts the component to the support panel and a protrusion which extends into the bore from a sidewall thereof;
the protrusion including a rib which extends generally parallel with a longitudinal axis of the bore.
2. (Original) The support member of claim 1, wherein the retention element includes a boss which extends from the support panel.
3. (Original) The support member of claim 2, wherein the boss is formed from plastic.
4. (Original) The support member of claim 1, wherein the bore includes a first portion located adjacent to a fixing element receiving opening of the bore and a second portion, spaced from the opening, the second portion having a smaller diameter than the first portion.
5. (Cancelled).
6. (Previously Presented) The support member of claim 4, wherein the protrusion extends in at least the second portion of the bore.
7. (Previously Presented) A support member comprising:
a support panel; and

a retention element for use in mounting an associated component to the support panel, the retention element defining:

a bore for receiving an associated threaded fixing element which mounts the component to the support panel, and

a protrusion which extends into the bore from a sidewall thereof, the bore including a first portion located adjacent to a fixing element receiving opening of the bore and a second portion, spaced from the opening,

the second portion having a smaller diameter than the first portion, and

the protrusion extending in the first and second portions of the bore.

8. (Currently Amended) A support member comprising:

a support panel; and

a retention element for use in mounting an associated component to the support panel, the retention element defining:

a bore for receiving an associated threaded fixing element which mounts the component to the support panel, and

a protrusion which extends into the bore from a sidewall thereof,

the protrusion including an outer surface which defines an arc of an imaginary circle which is concentric with the bore and first and second side surfaces which connect the outer surface of the protrusion with a side wall of the bore, at least one of the outer surface and the first and second side surfaces has a taper toward an end of the bore which is opposite to a fixing element receiving opening of the bore.

9. (Currently Amended) The support member of claim [[8]] 1, wherein the protrusion includes first and second side surfaces which connect the an outer surface of the protrusion with a side wall of the bore.

10. (Original) The support member of claim 9, wherein at least one of the outer surface and the first and second side surfaces has a taper toward an end of the bore which is opposite to a fixing element receiving opening of the bore.

11. (Currently Amended) The support member of claim [[10]] 8, wherein the taper is of from about 0.2° to about 1.0°.

12. (Original) The support member of claim 1, wherein the protrusion subtends an angle from a longitudinal axis of the bore of at least 10°.

13. (Currently Amended) The support member of claim [[9]] 8, wherein the protrusion subtends an angle from the longitudinal axis of the bore of less than 30°.

14. (Original) The support member of claim 1, wherein the support member comprises a chassis of an imaging device.

15. (Previously Presented) An imaging device comprising the support member of claim 1.

16. (Previously Presented) A combination of a retention element and a fixing element comprising:

a retention element which defines a bore and a projection which extends into the bore;

the projection comprising a rib which extends generally parallel with a longitudinal axis of the bore; and

a threaded fixing element which is received by the bore, and which is capable of forming a helical groove in the bore, the projection engaging a threaded portion of the fixing element as the threaded fixing element is threadably engaged with the groove.

17. (Original) The combination of claim 16, wherein the fixing member comprises a screw.

18. (Cancelled).

19. (Previously Presented) The combination of claim 16, wherein the projection has an outer surface which defines an arc of an imaginary circle centered on the longitudinal axis of the bore.

20. (Original) The combination of claim 19, wherein the imaginary circle has a diameter which is less than a maximum diameter of the screw.

21. (Original) The combination of claim 20, wherein the imaginary circle has a diameter which is about that of the minimum diameter of the screw.

22. (Original) The combination of claim 16, wherein the projection subtends an angle of less than about 30° of a circle defined by the bore.

23. (Original) An imaging device comprising the combination of claim 16.

24. (Original) The imaging device of claim 23, further comprising:
a chassis which includes a plurality of the retention elements;
a plurality of the fixing members; and
at least one component which is clamped to the chassis with the fixing elements and the retention elements.

25. (Previously Presented) A method of clamping a component to a support member comprising:

inserting a threaded portion of a fixing member through an aperture in the component and into a bore defined by the support member;

rotating the fixing member relative to the bore such that a helical groove is formed in the bore, a projection extending into the bore from a sidewall thereof and engaging the threaded portion upon reinsertion of a fixing member, the projection comprising a rib which extends generally parallel with a longitudinal axis of the bore.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the projection serves to perform at least one of:

urging the threaded portion of the fixing member out of alignment with a longitudinal axis of the bore; and

engaging the threaded portion.

27. (Previously Presented) The support member of claim 7, wherein the support member comprises a chassis of an imaging device.

28. (Previously Presented) The support member of claim 8, wherein the support member comprises a chassis of an imaging device.

29. (Previously Presented) The support member of claim 1, comprising a plurality of the retention elements, each of the retention elements being integrally formed with the support panel.

30. (New) The support member of claim 16, wherein the rib is formed of a relatively rigid material whereby portions of the rib are ground away during formation of the helical groove.